

# TEN COMMANDMENTS ARE THE CIVIL AND RELIGIOUS LAWS OF COMMUNITY

Quaint Amana Colony in Iowa Bars Hair Ribbons to Women and Mustaches to Men and Punishes Boys Who Play Baseball on Sunday by Barring Them From Church for Two Sundays—Society Is Worth \$8,000,000.

Minneapolis, Minn.—Down in Iowa county, Iowa, an old man who was born in Germany seventy-one years ago told why 1,600 persons, men, women and children, live a community life on 26,000 acres of Iowa's most fertile land and are happy.

The old man, who munched an apple as he talked, is the head of the Amana society. The society is worth at least \$8,000,000 in lands and improvements. Not one member has a cent of property in his own name. Everything earned in the Amana colony, which contains seven prosperous little towns and is more than sixty years old, goes to the common treasury.

The old man, George Heinemann, was asked if it were true that four Amana schoolboys who had played baseball on Sunday in the little community had been punished by being banned from church for eight weeks. I had heard this about Amana and it had resulted in my trip to the colony.

"Yes, it is true," said the old man. "They were punished, but that is an exaggeration"—he pronounced "exaggeration" with the "g" hard—"they were only made to stay away from our church for two Sundays, not eight. That would be too much."

"Up where I live most boys wouldn't look at that as a punishment."

The old man smiled. It was a gentle, tolerant smile, the smile with which everybody in Amana greets visitors.

"It is different here," he said. "Church to us is everything. It was so with our fathers. It is so with our sons and daughters and it is so with our grandsons and our granddaughters. To bar the children from church, that is the worst punishment."

Things That Are "Worldly."

Then the old man told something of the Amana society, of the community life in the seven villages, a communism not founded on socialistic or economic belief, but a communism founded on religion and subordinate to religion. He told me why the school girls in Amana are not permitted to wear hair ribbons, why the men of Amana wear no mustaches, why the women wear sunbonnets and not hats, why the tango has never been danced in Amana, just as the tango's predecessors, the waltz and the two-step, were not danced; why there is no card playing, why baseball and football and all competitive sports are banned.

It was, he said, because these things are "worldly."

When I rose to go I asked the old man for his picture. "You are the head of an unusual organization," I said, "probably the most successful community project in America. May I have your picture?"

"No," he said, still smiling. "Now you ask me to do something which is worldly. It is not wrong to you, but to me it is. It is not the spirit of Amana. We have no newspapers here."

I thanked him with the feeling that he was a kind of benevolent patriarch. He smiled and said nothing, but as I opened the wooden gate which led to the road the old man on the porch still smiling, shouted out a cheery "Willkommen." It sounded like "You are welcome," "Come again" and "Good luck," all combined, and it sounded as if the old man on the porch really meant it.

The seven villages of the Amana society, grouped within a radius of eight miles between the bluffs in the river valley, look like pictures from the Old World. They are in the valley of the Iowa river, on 26,000 acres of the most fertile land in the middle West. Amana is the largest village. It has about 450 residents and at Amana are located the wool mills and calico print factory of the society. Amana woolen goods and Amana calico are known to merchants as far east as New York and as far west as San Francisco. East village has its church, school, store, bakery, dairy, post office and sawmill.

The buildings in all the Amana communities are on the same plan, quaint two-story gabled buildings of old German architecture. Some of the buildings, as the stores and hotels, all conducted by the society, are of red brick and covered with vines. Others are small frame buildings, covered with vines, but unpainted—paint in Amana is a sign of vanity and prohibited. It is in these small houses that the families live. The houses and other buildings, as everything in the colony, are owned by the society and families are assigned to their homes by the "elders," the governing body in each town. In front of the buildings and at the side of the buildings and back of the buildings are flower beds, fruit trees and grapevines.

Community Kitchen.

In each village are community kitchens and community dining rooms. Here the food, and there is lots of it, is prepared and served under the direction of the best cooks in the villages. The boys and men sit at one table in the dining room. The women and girls sit at another. It is less worldly this way, say the old Amana residents.

It was in 1854 that the first Amana

village was founded by members of the Church of the True Inspiration, or "Separatists," as they had been called in Germany since the beginning of the eighteenth century. The men who founded the first village named it Amana, a name taken from the Bible and meaning "remain true." These men had come to America in the forties with their families seeking religious freedom. They had settled in New York, but the community had grown faster than land could be acquired and they moved West. The first purchase of land in Iowa was 3,300 acres. Gradually more land was acquired and the other six villages established—West Amana, South Amana, High Amana, East Amana, Middle Amana and Homestead.

In 1863 there were about 1,600 members of the Amana society. The number is about the same today.

It was in 1859 that the society was incorporated under the laws of the state of Iowa. The men who had come from Germany to the new country had determined on community life as the best method of holding true to the ideals of their religion. The society was incorporated as a religious and benevolent society under the name Amana society.

The constitution of the society declares that the foundation of the civil organization shall "remain forever God." "The purpose of our organization," reads the constitution, "is therefore no worldly or selfish one."

Article II of the constitution states: "It is our unanimous will and resolution that the land purchased here and that may hereafter be purchased shall be and remain a common estate and property, with all improvements thereon and all appurtenances thereto, as also with all the labor, cares, trouble and burdens, of which each member shall bear his allotted share with a willing heart."

And here is the provision in the constitution which shows how the Amana society makes the money to care for its people: "Agriculture, manufactures and trades shall form the means of sustenance, and out of the income of these the expenses of the society shall be defrayed. If any surplus remains it shall be applied to improvements, to the erection of school and meeting houses, care of the old and sick, the foundation of a business and safety fund and to benevolent purposes in general."

The Aged Cared For.

The control and management of the society is vested in thirteen trustees elected annually from among the elders. Death is about the only thing that changes the make-up of the board of trustees. There are no bickerings in Amana and a public examiner has never been called in to audit the society's books. The people of Amana place explicit trust in the trustees and the officers.

Every member of the Amana society at the time of joining is in duty bound to give his or her personal property and real property to the trustees for the common fund. The member is entitled to credit for this property on the society books and is given a receipt signed by the president and secretary. This property is secured by the pledge of the common property of the society. If a member either voluntarily leaves the society or is expelled this property is given back, but without interest.

And when he joins the society, according to the constitution, "each member is entitled to free board and dwelling, to support and care in old age, sickness and infirmity, and to an annual sum of maintenance, the amount of which is to be fixed by the trustees. The members release all claims for wages, interest and any share in the income and of the society separate from the common stock."

"That shows you that communism here is not practised for temporal or pecuniary purpose," said President Heinemann after he had shown the constitution of the society. "It is not an experiment to solve great social problems. We care nothing for politics, for economics. We have adopted the communistic plan because we think by its means we are better able to lead true and Christian lives."

"Do you vote?" I asked.

"No," said the head of the society. "Sometimes we vote in township elections. But not for national issues."

"Then you are citizens?" I said.

"Yes," he replied. "And we try to be good citizens. We have no beer because Iowa has gone on record against beer. We have even stopped dispensing the wine we make here."

"How are your sympathies in the war?" I asked.

"War is against our religious faith," he said. "We do not believe in war. War is unnecessary. It is caused by money. Love for gain is responsible. Here in Amana there is no war, for we have no love for gain."

It is this spirit, "No love for gain," that is noticeable throughout the Amana communities.

Educate Their Doctors.

Take, for instance, the physicians. There are three of them, all members

of the society. They were sent by the society to the colleges at which they were graduated. All their college expense was borne by the society. One even was sent to Europe to study. And when they completed their education they came back to Amana and became community physicians. The members of the society their services are free, but outsiders are charged a fee. This fee, however, does not go to the physician. It goes to the society.

The physicians are the envy of Amana, although none of the Amana residents will admit that there is such a thing as envy. When the physicians pass on the road the Amana housewives turn their sunbonneted heads and the Amana boys and girls look with open admiration for the Amana physicians have automobiles. They are the only people in the society who have them. The machines were purchased by the society and they are the only machines in the Amana villages.

Work in the Amana villages is parceled out by the elders. If a man likes machinery he may go to the mills as a machinist. If he is fat and cheerful he may be assigned to run one of the Amana hotels. The elders see that the tasks are done and there is little complaint of laziness. There is a rumor that on one occasion years ago a man who refused to work and on whom suspension from church had no effect was expelled from the society.

In the Amana villages there are prayer meetings every night in the year. There are no ministers. The elders conduct the services in church, at funerals and at weddings.

Marriage is neither encouraged nor discouraged. Mr. Heinemann, the president, is a bachelor.

The Ten Commandments are the religious and civil laws of Amana. Oaths are forbidden, averments and confirmations are made by affirmation. No attempt is made to follow styles in dress. Hair ribbons, mustaches, neckties and other adornments are banned. Games and "all frivolous and worldly amusements are not countenanced. Cards are unknown."

To the outside it would seem that life for the Amana children must be something of a burden, for school is conducted six days a week, fifty-two weeks in the year, all sports are banned, dancing is unknown and each child must learn sixty-two "rules of conduct for children." The teachers are men, members of the society.

Despite the simple life in Amana the children, most of them, stay in the society. President Heinemann and other officials estimate that 60 per cent of the children stay in Amana.

Can Leave If They Wish.

"Sometimes they go away," said Mr. Heinemann. "They seek excitement. But many of them come back. We let them go if they wish. There is no compulsion here."

Women in Amana villages work in the mills, in the stores, in the fields and dairies. The stores are general merchandise stores, one in each village. They are kept like the Amana houses, absolutely clean, and many people from outside the colony trade in the Amana stores.

Four members of the society, including Metz, came to America in 1842. They were given full power to act for all the members and purchased land where they thought it best.

The travelers decided on 5,000 acres of land on the old Seneca Indian reservation in New York. They sent word back to Germany and in three years, from 1843 to 1846, some 800 persons came across the sea and settled on the society's land. The society was then known as the "Ebenezer" society. Here the community idea was begun, says Louis L. Collins of the Minneapolis Journal; but it was not until 1854, when the move to Iowa was made, that the present system of communism was worked out in detail.

WIFE OF NAVY OFFICER



Mrs. David V. Taylor, wife of Chief Naval Constructor Taylor, is one of the most beautiful of the naval contingent of Washington society, and is one of the most active of that set this winter. Her dinners and entertainments have won for her a commanding place in the ranks of the "smart set."

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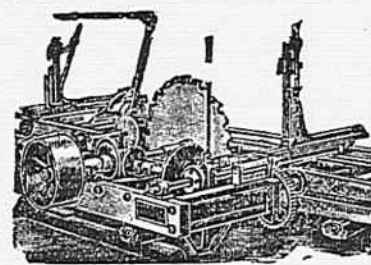
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